

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Canceled)

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): A system according to Claim 11, further comprising:

analysis means for analyzing information about the trouble in the product; and

search means for searching for an operation for resolving the trouble in the product on the basis of the result of the analysis.

Claim 3 (Original): A system according to Claim 2, wherein analysis by said analysis means is performed on the side of a user using the product.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): A system according to Claim 2, further comprising notice means for sending a notice of a cost or a time required for the operation.

Claim 5 (Original): A system according to Claim 2, further comprising:

management means for managing a guarantee period of the product,

wherein said cost depends on the managed guarantee period.

Claim 6 (Original): A system according to Claim 2, further comprising:

management means for managing information about specifications of the product,

wherein analysis by said analysis means depends on the managed information about the specifications.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): A system according to Claim 11, further comprising:

storage means for storing contents of an operation actually performed to resolve the trouble in the product or results of the operation.

Claim 8 (Canceled)

Claim 9 (Canceled):

Claim 10 (Cancelled).

Claim 11. (Currently Amended) A trouble management system ~~capable of communicating, through a network, with a customer apparatus connected to a product, or a service person's apparatus,~~ comprising:

first receiving means for receiving, through a network, from ~~said a~~ customer apparatus connected to a printer, trouble information of the printer product;

first determining means for determining whether or not an inquiry is necessary, based on the contents basis of the trouble information received by said first receiving means;

second determining means for determining whether each of the customer apparatus and the printer has automatic diagnosis functions;

transmitting means for transmitting the inquiry item relating to the printer product to said customer apparatus, if said first determining means determines that the inquiry is necessary and if said second determining means determines that none of the customer apparatus and the printer have the automatic diagnosis functions;

second receiving means for receiving, from said customer apparatus, a response which is input to said customer apparatus on the basis of the inquiry item transmitted by said

transmitting means; and

diagnosing means for diagnosing the printer product, in accordance with the response received by said second receiving means, ~~when the determining means determines that the inquiry is necessary.~~

Claim 12. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling a trouble management system ~~capable of communicating, through a network, with a customer apparatus connected to a product, or a service person's apparatus~~, comprising:

a first receiving step of receiving, through a network, from a said customer apparatus connected to a printer, trouble information of the printer product;

a first determining step of determining whether or not an inquiry is necessary, based on the contents basis of the trouble information received in said first receiving step;

a second determining step of determining whether each of the customer apparatus and the printer has automatic diagnosis functions;

a transmitting step of transmitting the inquiry item relating to the printer product to said customer apparatus, if said first determining step determines that the inquiry is necessary and if said second determining step determines that none of the customer apparatus and the printer have the automatic diagnosis functions;

a second receiving step of receiving, from said customer apparatus, a response which is input at said customer apparatus on the basis of the inquiry item transmitted in said transmitting step; and

a diagnosing step of diagnosing the printer product, in accordance with the response received in said second receiving step, ~~when the determining step determines that the~~

~~inquiry is necessary.~~

Claim 13. (Currently Amended) A storage medium storing a program for executing a process of controlling a trouble management system ~~capable of communicating, through a network, with a customer apparatus connected to a product, or a service person's apparatus,~~ the program storing:

a first receiving step of receiving, through a network, from a ~~said~~ customer apparatus connected to a printer, trouble information of the printer product;

a first determining step of determining whether or not an inquiry is necessary, based on the contents basis of the trouble information received in said first receiving step;

a second determining step of determining whether each of the customer apparatus and the printer has automatic diagnosis functions;

a transmitting step of transmitting the inquiry item relating to the printer product to said customer apparatus, if said first determining step determines that the inquiry is necessary and if said second determining step determines that none of the customer apparatus and the printer have the automatic diagnosis functions;

a second receiving step of receiving, from said customer apparatus, a response which is input at said customer apparatus on the basis of the inquiry item transmitted in said transmitting step; and

a diagnosing step of diagnosing the printer product, in accordance with the response received in said second receiving step, ~~when the determining step determines that the inquiry is necessary.~~

Claim 14. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 11, further comprising:

diagnosis possibility determining means for determining whether or not a diagnosis is possible;

additional determination means for determining whether or not a further inquiry is necessary, if the diagnosis possibility determining means determines that the diagnosis is not possible; and

additional transmission means for transmitting a further inquiry item to the customer apparatus, if the additional determination means determines that the further inquiry is necessary.